

# TALES OF LAKE AND LONG SHORE

## BEING THE CHRONICLES OF SOME FRESH-WATER SALTS

BY GEORGE TICKELL

### SCARLET SILAS

"T'S a nasty night on the river," said the barge-tender, as he peered through the window of the shanty into the fog that lay sullenly on the water, a heavy, uncomplaining fog born of the smoke of Chicago chimneys and the driving white mists of Lake Michigan.

What gets me is why any man takes to lake sailing in the first place, and why he keeps at it after he makes one trip and learns what a damn life it is. Now, there was myself. I tried it just skinned at the first port we made and planned my way back to Chicago on a freight. It was tough traveling, but it beat deck busting on a lumber boat all to pieces. (Bridge-tender) is as close as ever I want to get to sailing again.

I guess that lake sailors are so stuck on their pipe that become them at it. There's Joe Williams, Bandy Joe, as we call him, left sight on that west where you're stuck now, six months ago, and told me how he'd saved up a few hundred dollars and him and his pal Sam Barrow, was going to start into business for themselves and never would set foot on a ship again. But I notice Bandy's back end on the Jim Hill and Sam's on a fore-and-aft stunt on the schooner Mary-lane.

Maybe they might have kept their word, though, if they hadn't struck a snag before they got started on the new deal. This year Bandy was always a close sailin' sort of guy, which is a most unusual thing with sailors. Sam often made up his mind to leave, too, but never made it up enough to begin. But when his uncle died and left him \$500, Bandy heard of it and looked him in right away.

"See here, Sam," said he, "you've got a foot long enough. With the use of some cash and a few dollars' worth of money, you can get a good job. You don't need to spend anything with me; I'm well paid for what I do and have plenty of loose change. If your mate has come into a bit of coin, as I heard some of the boys sayin', the best thing he can do is to salt it away and not waste it."

With that he called for more refreshments and paid the waiter out of a big bundle of bills that made Bandy and Sam's eyes fairly bulge out of their heads when they seen it. "Must be a good business, yours," said Bandy, "judgin' from the size of your roll."

"Why, yes," said the old fellow, "it pays well, and I hope it'll pay better still before I get ready to retire into private life."

"Might I ask what business you're in?" said Bandy, quite polite.

The old chap smiled again and coughed.

"Before I tell you that," he said, "you must both promise not to betray me. I've taken a fancy to you boys and feel like trustin' you, but a man has to be careful in my line."

Bandy and Sam were all set up with curiosity, and they swore earnest to keep their mouths shut. The old fellow looked around as if to make sure nobody was piping him off, and tossed 'em a card with the name Austin Barram on it in nice printed letters.

Down in the corner was a picture of a screamin' eagle with the words "U. S. Secret Service" underneath.

"Did you ever hear of Scarlet Silas, the pirate terror of the South seas?" whispered Barram, leanin' across the table. They both shook their heads.

"I thought pirates was out of date," said Bandy. "Anyway I never heard of 'em shippin' on the lakes."

"Of course you didn't," said Barram. "This chap is too big a highflyer to go foolin' round a duck pond even if his trade was carried on here, which it ain't. No, boys, Scarlet Silas is a bloody-minded ruffian that has defied the European governments, robbin' vessels in the Pacific ocean, cutting the throats of men, women and children, sinkin' ships with all hands on board, and done all such devilments for years."



"Did You Ever Hear of Scarlet Silas?"

him on the quiet. Sam colored up, for he saw the old fellow was on to Bandy's nudge, but before he could say a word the stranger laughs quite jolly like.

"That's the correct ticket," he said, nodding at Bandy. "I like to see sailormen careful of their money, bein' as they have to work so hard for it. You don't need to spend anything with me; I'm well paid for what I do and have plenty of loose change. If your mate has come into a bit of coin, as I heard some of the boys sayin', the best thing he can do is to salt it away and not waste it."

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"I've heard of such things," said Bandy, who remembered reading a lot of half-railin' sea stories when he was a kid, "but I thought they was all done away with."

"That's right," said Barram. "This here Scarlet Silas is the last of the bunch, and he quit the same ten years ago and settled down. But the British government hit his trail the other day and he lit out of India and started for the States. There's a reward of \$50,000 for him, dead or alive. Two weeks ago I got the tip that he had come to Chicago, and here I am. I'm closin' in on him now, and figure that I may want some help. That's why I picked out you fellows. You're young and strong and got lots of nerve. If you agree to go in with me, I can promise you \$10,000 to cut up between the two of you when we land our man."

"We're on," said Bandy and Sam in the one breath; "but why don't you have the police help you?"

"Not me," said Barram. "I ain't bin 40 years in United States service for nothing. They'd want all the credit of the capture and most of the reward. It's differin' with you boys. I can see by your faces that you're honest,

and after you get your stake you'll be satisfied, and as you ain't in the profession you won't go tryin' to take the honor of makin' the arrest away from me."

"Sure thing," said Bandy, "the money's what we're after. You kin have the honor and welcome."

"It's a go," said Barram. "I hereby appoint you two as my deputies. Meet me tomorrow night at eight o'clock, and I'll tell you more about the job. Meanwhile not a word to a livin' soul unless you want to ruin our chances."

He slid away after that, and Bandy and Sam went to their lodgin's pretty near crazy with joy over their luck. They set up half the night talking over plans for spending the reward when they got it. Only, Bandy was sore that they had promised their help so cheap.

"We orter have half that \$50,000 by rights," said Bandy, "but howsoever, we'll not fool with old Daddy Nim's bum joint now. We'll buy a regular bang-up swell place and some day we'll own a steam yacht of our own and sail by the Jim Hall, smokin' 50-cent cigars and laughin' at the poor chaps slavin' on board of the old hulk."

The next night they met Barram 'cordin' to appointment. He shook hands with both of them.

"The net's around the villain, lads," he said, "and he can't escape us. I located him to-day and we'll start on his track at once. He has \$200,000 worth of precious stones stowed away somewhere, having converted all his property into diamonds, and such truck. Supposin' we land him to-night, have you boys a safe place to store the stuff till to-morrow?"

It happened that Bandy had a steel box in his trunk that he kept Sam's money and his own in. They had took it out of the bank that very day, having been scared by the money panic that started that year. He told Barram, who said it was the werry thing. Then he took them to a billiard hall where there was a big match game going on and dodged behind a pillar to size up the crowd.

"There's Scarlet Silas, lads," he said, pointing at a fat, red-faced man in the front row, a man with a flashy vest and thick gold watch chain. "From now on we've got to shadow him close."

Soon after the fat man goes out and they follow him. He boarded a Madison street car and they jumped on the hind platform. Twelve blocks farther he got off in front of a mission house where service was being held and strolls inside. Barram and the deputies followed and took seats behind him. The boys was surprised that a murdering pirate would fancy such a place, but Barram whispered 'em to lay low, that it was probably one of his cunnin' tricks.

The fellow preachin' was a good speller and kept calling for the sinners to come up and be saved, and Bandy and Sam nearly fell out of their seats with surprise when Scarlet Silas suddenly jumps up, goes to the platform and begins makin' a speech. He told 'em all how he'd been a orful sinner and pirate of the seas in his younger days, but that he had repented and meant to give himself up to be punished for what he'd done. Old Barram looked mighty serious.

"This won't do," he said to Bandy. "If he surrenders to the police we'll never see a cent of that reward. We must get him soon as he leaves here."

When the meeting broke up they followed Scarlet Silas to the street corner. Barram steps up and puts his hand on his shoulder.

"Scarlet Silas, I arrest you in the name of the United States government!" he said.

Bandy and Sam closed in on him, expecting he might show fight, but the pirate was meek as you please.

"I'll go," he said. "I won't make any trouble. I was meanin' to give myself up anyhow."

"Where have you cached them diamonds?" asks Barram.

"They're in a belt 'round my waist inside my vest," said the pirate.

"Fine business," said Barram. "We'll go straight to your room, lads. I'll fetch the head of our Chicago office to-morrow morning, and then we'll take him to Washington."

When they reached the room they stripped the pirate, and there were the diamonds, monstrous big ones, sparklin' like fire.

"Two hundred thousand dollars' worth!" said Barram, amuckin' his lips. "Lord, what a easy haul. Fetch out the money box."

Bandy unlocked his trunk and perched the box with the \$1,000 in it belongin' to him and Sam. Barram emptied the diamonds atop of the bills and laughed.

"Yesterday that bunch of greenbacks looked big to you lads," he said, "but they're small 'longside of the easy money you made to-night."

After awhile Barram and the prisoners turned into bed, Bandy and Sam having agreed to sit up for the night. They was too excited over their good luck to sleep, anyway, and wondered that Barram could snore away like he did. Early the next morning Barram tied up the pirate with ropes hand and foot so that he couldn't make a move and told the boys to come along with him to make his report. He locked the door himself and put the key in his pocket.

When they got to the federal building he left them waiting at the main entrance while he went to the chief's office to see if he could receive them.

"I may be delayed, lads," said he. "The chief's a busy man, and a fellow can't get to him right away, sometimes."

They waited for it might a bin half an hour, but Barram didn't come back. After another half hour passed Bandy got restless.

"Wat right has he keepin' us standin' 'round this way," said he. "Come along and we'll look him up."

They went around hunting for the secret service office and didn't get much satisfaction from anyone they asked. Finally they ran into a policeman.

"I'll ask him," said Bandy. "It don't matter tellin' him—now we've got Scarlet Silas under lock and key."

The copper listened to their story and started to laugh.

"Wat you fellows need is a couple of guardsmen," said he. "Scarlet Silas be hangin'; there ain't no such person. You've been buncoed, that's wot. Better hike back to your room and see wot's left of your property."

Bandy and Sam turned pale as ashes and broke for their lodgings under full sail. The door of the room was open and so was the trunk and money box. The diamonds was still there, but the greenbacks and pirate was gone. Wot's more, Barram, the insullin' old devil, had left a note sayin' he regretted leavin' them as they was a couple of as nice, honest, confidin' young chaps as he ever met. He said the diamonds was the best make of phonies on the market, and worth four dollars of any man's money. The note ended by sayin' that him and Scarlet Silas was off to the South seas again, and if ever the boys got tired of lake cruisin' to look him up and they'd always be sure of good jobs as pirates.

Bandy and Sam ain't pals any more, each holdin' the other responsible for bein' took in. Some folks said it was their own fault for bein' so greedy for blood money, but I dunno as they oughter be blamed for that. Nearly all men has faults, even bridge-tenders.



"Goes to the Platform and Begins Making a Speech."

### RETURN TO WILDCAT CURRENCY.

Vicious Features Contained in Bill Passed by the Republicans.

The Republican party as represented in congress has passed a currency bill that will eventually plague them. All the Democrats and 14 Republicans voted against it in the house, and Senator La Follette tried to talk it to death in the senate, where four Republican senators also voted against it. It must be a very bad bill that would force such a large number of Republicans to bolt their party on the eve of a national election. It is a great victory for the Rockefeller interests and the chief feature of it, which was in the original Aldrich bill—the issue of currency with railroad and other bonds as security—by individual banks will give the National City bank control of millions to further rig the stock market. Such bonds are to be accepted at 90 per cent. of their market value, and we may be sure that the price of such bonds will be boosted accordingly, whatever their real value may be.

The asset, or wildcat currency scheme of the bill, is intended as a sop to the asset school of finance, and commercial paper is to be accepted as security for currency at 75 per cent. of its face value. The attempt to make the bill popular by the requirement that the banks pay one per cent. on government deposits is made harmless to the big banks which are government depositaries for they are not required to pay even this small interest rate.

How vicious the bill is will take time to develop, for even the experts of the United States treasury do not yet know its full powers. The New York banks are organizing to be ready to issue currency under its provisions, and from their haste to do so, there is fear that a recurrence of the panic is possible. It must be remembered that the United States treasury will be in no condition to assist the banks when the annual squeeze for money comes this fall. What a financial mess the Republican party has produced by its tinkering methods.

### DEMOCRATIC FIGHT FOR LIFE.

Republican Disfranchisement Plan a Serious Menace.

The Democratic party must make a good fight this year, if its existence as an important political power is to be preserved. Its position is already seriously threatened by Republican sentiment, which appears in various parts of the country to favor an enforcement of section 2 of the fourteenth amendment to the constitution. This would reduce the representation in congress and in the electoral college of those states in which the negro has been disfranchised.

The Ohio Republican platform contains a plank on the subject, and Representative Ketter of that state has introduced into congress a bill to the same purpose. This measure was, of course, not passed at the recent session, but if the country should go overwhelmingly Republican next fall it will unquestionably be heard of again.

If the second section of the fourteenth amendment were enforced, the south's representation in congress would be reduced from 98 to 61, and there would be a proportional reduction in electoral votes. At present there are only 37 Democrats in congress, outside of New York city.

Unless great Democratic gains are made in the north, the Democratic party will be reduced to something like 100 members in congress, and its influence in national politics will be greatly lessened.—Chicago Journal (Rep.)

### Extravagance of Congress.

In opposing the president's proposition for four more battleships in the present session of congress Representative Tawney of Minnesota said that

"in preparation for war the United States, with an army of 52,000 men and a navy of 42,000, is expending this year only \$66,000,000 less than England, with an army of 204,000 men and a navy of 129,000 men; only \$35,000,000 less than Germany, with her army of 600,000 and her navy of \$2,000, and we are spending \$2,683,000 more than France, with her army of 550,000 men and her navy of \$6,000." These are portentous words for the Republican party, which is in control of all branches of the government. The man who uttered them is chairman of the house appropriations committee and one of the Republican leaders of that chamber. Moreover, the appropriations for the army and navy which he denounced thus when they were before the house have been increased since that time. They are larger than in any year except during the civil war and the Spanish war periods. This immense outlay in time of profound peace is, considering the relatively diminutive size of our army and navy, discreditable to the Republican party, and may prove dangerous to it.—Leslie's Weekly.

Small Solace for Editors. Nobody has been fooled by the decision of the special committee on the pulp and paper question, after a month of investigation, that still more "me" is required to study a very simple subject. This conclusion was predetermined when the committee was created and there has never been any occasion to doubt that it would faithfully fulfill its appointed purpose. Some credulous Republican editors may have expected favor in their own particular tariff needs as a reward for strenuous work to prevent a broader attack on the great wall of protection. If they did they understand the situation better.

### KIND THOUGHT OF THE BRIDE.

Possibly Turned Silly Custom Into Something Really Worth While.

"The most considerate girl I ever knew got married yesterday," said the man. "She showed her thoughtfulness in a most unusual way. The day before the wedding she called the attention of the rest of the family to a row of old shoes standing in a downstairs closet."

"I want you to throw these after the carriage," she said. "They are all mated. I collected them to throw away. I learned some time ago that certain poor souls who have hard work to get clothes of any description keep a lookout for big weddings. They hang around the house at going-away time and pick up the good luck shoes. Maybe they get a fit, and maybe they don't. Anyway, I've done all I could to accommodate them."

"Here are six pairs of shoes to be freed after me. If somebody doesn't get fitted in that collection, it isn't my fault."

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Wouldn't Wash It. "What is that young man doing out there?"

"Trying to attract my attention with the handkerchief flirtation, I guess."

"You do not seem to be responding."

"No, I am not his laundress."—Nashville American.

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"It's a Nasty Night on the River."